

# CJTF-HOA makes breakthrough with business meeting in Djibouti

Photos and Story by Lance Cpl. Adam C. Schnell

**DJIBOUTI CITY, Djibouti** – Members of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa along with the Djibouti Chamber of Commerce met with local business leaders to converse about the future of business in Djibouti, Jan. 27.

The CJTF-HOA Contingency Contracting Office and Kellogg, Brown and Root representatives were present to open lines of communication between potential future vendors in the area.

"It has been a successful day," commented Said Omar Moussa, president of the Djibouti Chamber of Commerce, at the close of the discussion. "I hope we continue these meetings."

This was the first time business leaders of Djibouti met with buyers aboard Camp Lemonier. Many business owners have products they would like to sell but before had no way of communicating with buyers working with CJTF-HOA, said Moussa.

"The most important thing is coming up with a place where the buyers and sellers can go to talk with each other," he said.

With plans of creating a place for companies to market their products, other questions from business leaders were answered. Many business leaders wondered what they could do to be approved sell products aboard Camp Lemonier.

"Our main goal was to educate local businessmen concerning the rules and regulations we must follow when purchasing products from new vendors," said Cmdr. Teddie L. Dyson, contracting officer for the CJTF-HOA contracting office.

The meeting was not just beneficial for businesses in Djibouti. For Kellogg, Brown and Root, which spent millions of dollars running Camp Lemonier last year, the conference also provides more companies to choose from to get the best product for the money.

"It really benefits all parties to have an open economy here," said Michael W. Page, director of logistics for KBR. "It's also great to have competition to boost the economy and drive down prices."

Besides opening the lines of communication, Air Force Col. David J. Gruber, director of CJTF-HOA's communication section, gave a period of instruction highlighting the importance of the Internet and how Djibouti could benefit from e-commerce.

"The class really provided basic knowledge about the

Internet to participants," said Gruber. "I think the Internet will be a key in boosting the economy in the country."

Officials and business leaders said, many

more meetings should happen in the months to come to not only build relationships with the country of Djibouti but also boost the country's economy with international business growth.



(Above) Cmdr. Teddie L. Dyson, contracting officer for the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa Contingency Contracting Office, talks with a group of business leaders about the rules her office must go by when purchasing products from new vendors. (Below) Air Force Col. David J. Gruber, director of communications for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, talks with business leaders in a Djibouti Chamber of Commerce meeting here Tuesday. The meeting opened up lines of communication between the U.S. military in Djibouti and businesses in the region.

